

# Grafton, Massachusetts

## Master Plan

### Phase II Kick-Off



*February 27, 2023*



# Phase II Scope of Work

CMRPC proposes to assist the Town of Grafton in the development of its Master Plan by providing the following Phase II services:

- Community Engagement
- Strategy Articulation: Vision, Goals, Objectives, and Action Items
- Preliminary Chapter Development

# Deliverables Phase 2A

- Website & social media pages
- Continual community outreach
- Community Survey
- Stakeholder Interviews
- Visioning Workshop
- Vision Statement
- Goals & Objectives
- Goals & Objectives Workshop
- Maps
- Chapters for each core element
- Presentation of findings/draft

# Timeline

	Winter 2022- 2023	Spring 2023	Summer 2023	Fall 2023	Winter 2023- 2024	Spring/ Summer 2024
<b>Phase IIa and IIb Tasks: Community Engagement and Chapter Development</b>						
Public Mtg. 1: Kickoff	2/27					
Community Engagement Campaign						
Community Survey	3/14					
Stakeholder Interviews						
Workshop 1						
Vision Statement Development						
Goals and Objectives Development						
Workshop 2						
Plan Development (chapters)						
Public Mtg. 2: Presentation of Findings						
<b>Phase III Tasks: Chapter refinement, plan finalization, and implementation plan</b>						
Public Mtg. 1: Kickoff						
Plan Development (non-chapter elements)						
Implementation Matrix						
Input and Revisions						
Public Mtg. 2: Presentation of Final Draft						

# Community Engagement

## General Tools

March: Facebook Page Launch

March: Website Launch

- CMRPC & Town of Grafton Contacts
- About the Master Plan
- Survey Link
- Workshop Invitations
- Project Timeline
- General Project Resources
- Master Plan email distribution list sign-up

## Survey

March-June: Survey Distribution

- Paper survey copies & completion boxes placed in the Public Library and Municipal Center
- Online survey link on Master Plan website, Facebook page, and Town pages
- Flyers posted around Town with survey link
- Press release to local print and media outlets to announce Master Plan effort & survey link
- Emails to Town stakeholders, including organizations, committees, and non-profits
- Grafton Public TV?

# Community Engagement

## Stakeholder Interviews (10)

February: CMRPC to confirm list of stakeholders for interviews, acquire contacts

February-May: Stakeholder interviews

## Public Workshops (2)

March: Plan 1<sup>st</sup> Public Workshop for vision statement crafting & preliminary goals

April: Host 1<sup>st</sup> Public Workshop

June: Plan 2<sup>nd</sup> Public Workshop for content approval/edits & revised goals

June: Attend Grafton Farmers' Market to gather public input & promote workshop

July: Host 2<sup>nd</sup> Public Workshop

# Survey Draft (pt 1)

## 1. What has been your experience with housing in Grafton?

I find the cost of housing affordable

I or someone I know face difficulties remaining in Grafton

Grafton is accessible to new families

Grafton is accessible to young adults moving out of their parents' home

Grafton is accessible to elderly residents

Grafton needs growth management

(Extremely Agree Somewhat Agree Neither Agree nor Disagree Somewhat Disagree Extremely Disagree)

## 2. What is your experience and/or other resident's experience aging in Grafton?

There are accessible options to downsize

There are options to enter assisted living

There is access to elder services

It is financially feasible to age in Grafton

(Extremely Agree Somewhat Agree Neither Agree nor Disagree Somewhat Disagree Extremely Disagree)

## 3. What areas or streets in Grafton would be good options to build more housing? (including areas in walking distance of services, vacant/underutilized land)

*Include zoning map with numbered areas in Survey Monkey*

## 4. What opportunities for improvement would you prioritize for the Public School system?

# Survey Draft (pt 2)

## **5. Which of the following options for future development would you support in the Town Center?**

New mixed-use development (retail on the lower floor, housing on the upper floor)

More diverse business opportunities in existing buildings

More restrictive design guidelines

More flexible design guidelines

Small-size multifamily housing

Facade Improvement Program

## **6.What areas or streets in Grafton would be good options to open more businesses?** (including areas near residences and/or businesses)

## **7.What products or services do you go out of town for?**

## **8.What experiences have you or other residents had working in Grafton?** (Availability of work in many sectors, fair pay, commuting)

## **9.What areas in Grafton would be good options to preserve as open/non-developed land?** (including areas used for recreation, areas supporting animal and plant habitats)

## **10.What recreational opportunities would you like to see more of?** (for example: athletic fields, hiking/biking trails, playgrounds, picnic areas)

## **11. What areas or buildings in Grafton have sentimental value to you?**



# Survey Draft (pt 3)

**12.How often do you use the commuter rail? What improvements to service would increase your ridership?**

**13.How often do you use the WRTA? What specific improvements to service would increase your ridership?**

**14.What are the most difficult roads or intersections you encounter in Grafton on a regular basis?**

(as a driver, biker, or walker)

**15.On what roads, intersections, or areas of town should Grafton prioritize bike and pedestrian infrastructure**

(such as bike lanes, sidewalks, crosswalks)

**16.What are the barriers that limit your involvement in local government?** (select all that apply)

Transparency of boards and committees

Transparency of departments

Accessibility of meetings (time of day, location, inclusivity)

Lack of free time for volunteering

Disinterest

Other\_\_\_\_\_

**17.What is your connection with Grafton? Select all that apply.**

Current Resident

Business Owner

Landlord in town

Work in town

Other \_\_\_\_\_

# Survey Draft (pt 4)

## 18.How long have you lived in Grafton?

- Less than one year
- Between one year and three years
- Between four years and ten years
- Between eleven years and twenty years
- More than twenty years

## 19.Which age group do you belong to? (Select one)

- 18 to 24 years
- 25 to 34 years
- 35 to 44 years
- 45 to 54 years
- 55 to 59 years
- 60 to 64 years
- 65 to 74 years
- 75 to 84 years
- 85 years and over
- Decline to answer

## 20.What is your estimated combined family income?

- (Select one)
- Less than \$10,000
- \$10,000 to \$40,000
- \$40,000 to \$89,000
- \$89,000 to \$170,000
- \$170,000 to \$220,000
- \$220,000 or more
- Decline to answer

## 21.Race/ethnicity

- (Select all that apply)
- Asian
- Black or African American
- Hispanic or Latino
- Middle Eastern or North African
- Native American or Alaska Native
- Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander
- White or Caucasian
- Decline to answer

# Plan Development: Strategy Articulation

CMRPC will work with the Town to develop a Vision for the community.

Each chapter of the Master Plan will include a tiered set of strategies (goals, objectives, and action items), supporting the implementation of aspirational concepts.

These strategies will reflect public preference, data, best practices, and law.



# Chapter Development & Presentation of Findings

CMRPC will work with the Planning Department and Planning Board to develop core chapter elements. Findings will be organized into *rough* drafts of chapters.



**Land Use:** This chapter will draw on survey results, stakeholder interviews, and data research to identify present land use and designate the proposed distribution, location, and inter-relationship of public and private land uses. Some of the questions include:

- What are the desired characteristics of various areas of Grafton?
- Are there any underutilized areas?
- What changes, uses, layouts, businesses, and types of open spaces would residents like to see in North Grafton?



**Housing:** Examine existing and forecasted housing needs and objectives, including programs for the preservation, improvement, and development of housing. Grafton's population has been increasing rapidly. Consistent with the rest of the region, Grafton's home prices and residential property taxes have been trending up. In addition, seniors, young families, and middle-income workers are being priced out. Some of the questions the chapter will address include:

- Is the current housing stock consistent with the needs of Grafton residents?
- How can Grafton pursue policies and partnerships that will support the development of affordable housing?

# Chapter Development & Presentation of Findings



**Economic Development:** Identify policies and strategies for the stabilization and expansion of the local economic base. Educational services, health care and social assistance, as well as manufacturing, are the industries employing most workers in Grafton.

- What can be done to support these industries?
- How can Grafton support small businesses, startups, and home-based businesses?
- What strategies can Grafton employ to increase the vitality, appeal, and economic growth in its three business districts?



**Natural and Cultural Resources:** This chapter will provide an inventory of the Town's natural, cultural, and historic resources, and strategies for protection and management. Grafton has a robust inventory of historic resources. MACRIS lists historic structures, monuments, statues, and artifacts. The Town also has wetlands, core habitats, and species in need of protection. Drawing on survey answers, data, and stakeholder interviews, this chapter will address the following questions:

- How can the town continue to preserve its historic character while accommodating growth and contemporary interventions?
- What measures can Grafton take to protect native biodiversity?

# Chapter Development & Presentation of Findings



**Open Space and Recreation:** This chapter will provide an inventory of recreational resources and open space areas, and strategies for the protection and management of such areas.

- How can Grafton leverage its natural resources and outdoor recreation amenities?
- Can Grafton become a destination for outdoor recreation in Central Massachusetts?



**Services and Facilities:** This chapter will identify and analyze existing and forecasted needs for facilities and services used by the public. Grafton's population has been increasing rapidly over the last decade and is projected to continue this trend.

- What will the Town need to do to accommodate this growth (e.g., new classrooms, expanded municipal facilities, new housing development)?
- How can we ensure town facilities are at their optimal state to serve Grafton residents?
- How can Grafton expand services to accommodate new residents and maintain quality?

# Chapter Development & Presentation of Findings



**Transportation and Circulation:** This chapter will provide an inventory of existing and proposed circulation and transportation systems. Grafton has a Complete Streets Policy and Prioritization Plan, and it is working its way toward reducing traffic volumes and increasing walkability. At the same time, Grafton has a large percentage of commuters who use public transportation (Commuter Rail).

- What more can the Town do to enable and encourage transit-oriented development (TOD)?
- Which multimodal amenities do Grafton residents desire, and where?



**Quality of Life:** This chapter will analyze health, wellness, and other indicators of well-being to examine challenges and provide strategies for promoting healthy lifestyles. Grafton's population is aging faster than the rest of Massachusetts and the U.S. Its premature mortality rate is higher than several comparison towns. Its residents are well-educated and employed in high paying jobs, yet, parts of Grafton are impacted by poverty.

- What measures can the Town implement to reduce poverty and income inequality?
- Do low-income residents have access to housing, healthcare, childcare, and public services?
- How can the Town increase civic participation?

# Plan Development

CMRPC will organize the findings into rough drafts of Master Plan chapters.

Chapter	Description	Timeline
Statement of goals and policies		Jun-Aug-23
Land use	Identify present land use and designate the proposed distribution, location, and inter-relationship of public and private land uses.	Sep-Oct-23
Housing	Examine existing and forecasted housing needs and objectives, including programs for the preservation, improvement, and development of housing.	Sep-Oct-23
Economic development	Identify policies and strategies for the stabilization and expansion of the local economic base.	Nov-Dec-23
Natural and cultural resources	Provide an inventory of the Town's natural, cultural, and historic resources, and propose strategies for the protection and management of such areas.	Nov-Dec-23
Open space and recreation	Provide an inventory of recreational resources and open space areas, and propose strategies for the protection and management of such areas.	Nov-Dec-23
Services and facilities	Analyze existing and forecasted needs for facilities and services used by the public.	Jan Feb-24
Transportation/circulation	Provide an inventory of existing and proposed circulation and transportation system	Jan Feb-24
Quality of Life	Analyze health, wellness, and other indicators of well-being to explore the causes of local wellness challenges and provide strategies for promoting healthy lifestyles.	Jan Feb-24
Implementation		Phase III
Presentation of Findings	Public Meeting 2	



# Steering Committee Model

## **Roles:**

Monthly Committee Meetings

Feedback & Approval

Workshop Agendas

Vision Statement

Goals

Draft Chapters

Outreach & Recruitment

Facilitation at Workshops

## **Accountability:**

The MPSC is established through and accountable to the Planning Board. It will meet as a deliberative body subject to Open Meeting Law.

## **Membership:**

Membership in the MPSC is based on appointment by the Planning Board. Each member of the MPSC has full voting rights. Ex Officio members may be appointed by the Planning Board as needed, but do not have voting rights. Governance of the MPSC Committee is by Chair, Vice Chair, and Secretary. The governance positions shall be chosen from and by the voting members of the MPSC.

# Working Group Model

## **Roles:**

Monthly Meetings (no quorum needed)

Review of deliverables

- Workshop Agendas

- Vision Statement

- Goals

- Draft Chapters

Master Plan Champions

- Survey Promotions

- Local Knowledge

## **Accountability:**

The Working Group is established through and accountable to the Planning Board. Members do not have voting rights.

## **Membership:**

The Working Group is comprised of community stakeholders, including Grafton residents, business community representatives, local institutions, and developers. CMRPC staff will provide support to the group.

- Residents

- Business representatives

- Non-profits/institutions



## Contact

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